

opium and the like, the drug fiend will still be with us. The paregoric victim obtains throughout the land. That mixture contains a small quantity of opium, and must be taken in very large doses to produce any effect. Women used to come into my store three or four times a day for paregoric, some of them spending a dollar every twenty-four hours for this drug. Another woman used to get every day a pint bottle of Jamaica ginger, which contains about seventy-five per cent. alcohol, mix it with sugar and water, and take it that way. Calisaya was also commonly used by the drug fiend, and so were alcoholic tinctures, such as gentian, cinchona, and cardamon, on which there was a net profit of a hundred per cent.

These drugs were sold freely until the law prohibiting the sale of any preparation containing opium or morphine was enacted. And then the fiends were put to all sorts of devices to wheedle the drug out of the pharmacist. In fact, so great was the desperation of those suffering from the habit at that time, that I was frequently offered as much as twenty dollars for morphine tablets that would ordinarily have sold for two dollars and fifty cents. Through the action of the Association of Retail Druggists this law was repealed, because it was so broad as to cover many perfectly harmless so-called household remedies.

The lines of the law have been drawn closer and closer round the small dealer in drugs. The enormously profitable business in cocaine and opium has been shut off. The law against counter prescribing and the competition of the big department stores, on the other hand, have forced him to resort to "substitution." This practice was at one time the great curse of the business; but, like its predecessors, it is being eliminated. It was due very largely to the high price of what used to be, and in some cases still is, the patented staple. While the patents on such staples were in effect the articles cost the retailer a dollar; whereas, when the patents expired, the same cost him ten cents. For instance, phenacetin, which cost at first a dollar an ounce, now sells for twenty cents. This will give an idea of the profits the manufacturer made. In such cases, the temptation to substitute was very great. Many chemists used in the place of phenacetin a drug known as acetanilide, a similar coal-tar product costing about seventy-five cents a pound. It was claimed that this was just as effective as phenacetin; so, while the druggist committed a fraud, the patient was not really cheated. For aspirin, which cost thirty-five cents an ounce, the druggists largely used acetylsalicylate, which they procured at about seventy-five cents a pound, which was almost as good as aspirin itself.

Even while the patents protecting many of the staples have expired, the curse is still left in the form of the substitution habit. But in course of time there will be no pecuniary reason for this habit, and it will disappear.

DURING the agitation against substitution and other practices of the retail druggists, doctors used to tell me repeatedly that they would be only too glad to influence trade for any man on whom they could depend. This was my cue. I discarded all my former methods, and turned over a new leaf. But somehow the store had got an unpleasant reputation, which I found to be too great a burden to carry, in addition to my other load up the honest yet rocky road that I had determined to travel in the future.

So I closed out my business in New York and moved to St. Louis, where I bought out a small drugstore. Here I put the doctors' advice to the test by proving to the practitioners that their patients got honest treatment. My reputation as an honest dispenser soon spread, and I had customers coming to me from all directions. I am now making more money than I ever did during the counter-prescribing, opium-cocaine-and-paregoric period.

Between my Chicago and New York businesses I worked at the drug business in many cities throughout the country, and on each occasion got experiences well worth remembering. In Minneapolis I learned one thing, in Denver another, while Atlanta and New Orleans did their share in contributing to my education. To be sure, in each of these cities I found some superficial idiosyncrasies in the drug business; but fundamentally it was the same from Boston to San Francisco.

As a rule, I worked in stores in middle-class districts. Here we got prescriptions from all kinds of doctors, some of whom, being foreigners, thought in one language and wrote in another. Many were likely to write words that sounded like other words—"nitric acid" instead of "niter," for instance. All this was perplexing to the young druggist. In most cases, errors were obvious; but there were others, arising from similarity of terms, that were more subtle and required keener discrimination on the part of the dispenser. Twisted words and bad spelling often confused me greatly. A doctor might write "tr. digital purp." when he really meant to write "tr. digitalis," or "ether nitr. alcohol," which really means "spirits nitrous ether" (common sweet spirits niter). Another would write "syr. liquiritiae" for "syrup of licorice." These instances were multiplied many times, and, as the druggist realized that it rested with him to use his own judgment, he became very acute and accurate.

The prime thorn in my side, the most smarting one, was the occasional carelessness on the part of the doctor. For instance, one day a prescription calling for "sol. mag." was brought in. This might mean a number of things, such as solution of magnesia, solution of magnesia sulphate (Epsom salts), or solution of magendie, a powerful solution of morphine. Nor did the directions in this case throw any light on the subject. They were simply marked, "As directed."

I tried tactfully to get from the patient how the prescription was to be administered, and after some trouble learned that it was to be used with a hypodermic syringe. This of course meant the magendie solution. One can readily understand what a solution of magnesia would have done to the patient if he'd had intestinal trouble.

At first I felt great delicacy about correcting prescriptions without consulting the doctors; but this soon gave way to business expediency, and, partly to save trouble and avoid a scrap whenever possible, I used to make necessary changes, and no one was the wiser. This is a practice that most pharmacists fall into as they mature.

WHILE I was keeping a sharp lookout for incompatibles, and "other things," I still had an eye on the money-making side of the business. The possibilities here were considerable; though not so great as the public imagines. What was formerly known as the "blind" stock (fancy goods) has been cut into by big department stores, in many cases reduced to a negligible

quantity. But there were still ways left for the pharmacist to garner a few stray bits of profit from the handling of drugs themselves. In some cases inexperienced doctors or careless ones, not taking the trouble properly to diagnose a case, would, as a safe course, prescribe patent medicines. When such prescriptions came in, we used simply to pour the mixture from the regular patent medicine bottle into another, write a new label, double or triple the price, and hand over to the patient.

But danger lurked even in this method. I remember one case where a young doctor prescribed a patent preparation containing opium. This was given to a baby, which died from the effect. The parents tried to hold the druggist responsible, and only after great difficulty did he clear himself. You see, a dose that might be safe for an adult would be fatal to a child. There was no way by which the druggist could have safeguarded the patient, since no age was indicated in the prescription. The only hint as to the years of the patient is usually contained in the size of the dose to be given, an adult taking a teaspoonful, a baby five or ten drops.

I also learned that the relations between physician and patient are the same the country over. With the latter, skepticism and credulity go hand in hand. The patient, coming directly from the doctor after having his case diagnosed and explained to him, will ask the dispenser confidentially just what the prescription is to be used for. The young fellow just from college makes the mistake of telling the questioner, and often gets himself into hot water with the doctors.

Many doctors are wise in handling patients who have nothing the matter with them. Let me illustrate. One day I got a prescription that struck me as being quite absurd, and I took it to the boss. He smiled, told me to fill it, and charge the patient sixty cents. It called for aqua pura (pure water) and tincture cardamon compound (a mere flavoring), and cost about a cent—bottle, cork, and all. The patient paid sixty cents for this mixture, and was happy, repeating the prescription several times. The comedy touch came in where he further diluted the aqua pura by putting twenty drops in a goblet of water and taking it that way. In a short time he was "quite well again." Other illusion-haunted victims get sugar granules (little round pills), which are quite ineffective except that they help to dispel the imaginary malady, whatever that may be.

A funny yet typical case was cited by the boss one day. A customer of his got for fifteen years, every week, a prescription calling for ninety grains of starch and one grain of salol, divided into sixteen powders. Now, an entire grain of salol would hardly have been felt by a baby, some adults taking from ten to twenty grains at a dose. Yet this man was taking one-sixteenth of a grain three times a day, and paying fifty cents for a prescription that cost nothing but five minutes' labor at most. However, where a prescription costs only two or three cents, it is both tactful and considerate for the druggist, if he purposes charging half a dollar for the thing, to put it into a bottle with a nice label and paper cap, tied round with a pink string, which might bring the grand total up to four cents.

Druggists have been charged with intentionally nursing along such delusions for their own profit; but they urge that by doing so they often save the patient from treatment that might prove really harmful. In the circumstances, the "dough pill" practice may not be wholly ethical; but it is not immoral.

THE LUCK OF ROCKING LIGHT

By S. TEN EYCK BOURKE AND CHARLES FRANCIS BOURKE



NOR-EEN! Ho! No-rah Mac-Murdo!" The leather-lunged hail came over the dun waters of Barnegat Bay like the siren of an ocean liner.

The prolonged roar, with a note of command in it, invited the inquisition of idle marsh gulls, and startled a peaceful flock of ducks preening themselves a quarter of a mile away. They fled seaward, quacking disapproval (which was uncalled for) over Noreen MacMurdo's red rowboat, a stanch, carvel-built, sea-going little craft; and the girl stopped rowing, to turn her shapely head, with its tightly bound bronze hair, partly over her left shoulder. Her puckered, sunburned brow showed a little defiance, and her voice had the same note, mingled with amusement.

"It's Captain Jem, at the inlet," she said. "Now, I wonder does he think—does Ships Bottom mean to try to stop me going out today?"

A strong, flexible, round-armed boatgirl was Noreen MacMurdo, a daughter of a brawny race of boatmen of Barnegat, and a sailor on almost any craft short of a three-sticker; with cool gray eyes that were yet anxious with some ever-present fear or trouble.

Norah—or Noreen, as she insisted on being called: about the only bit of coquetry the strong, well poised girl permitted herself—dipped her oars again, and swung the red rowboat toward the south side of the inlet, a narrow slash in the outlying sandy barrier of the bay, which looked, with its bubbling waters, like a painted channel.

On the southerly sandpoint where she headed lay the white buildings of Ships Bottom Life Saving Station, where a group of coastguards clustered on the boathouse

runway, round the nose of the big white surfboat. As she neared the inner beach, fringed with rushes, growing russet with the approach of fall, Captain Casco, taking his pipe from his mouth, strode recklessly into the water and gripped the boat's bow, drawing it ashore.

AYE! You thought to win through without me seein' you? And if you hadn't come I'd been after you myself in two strokes, Miss Noreen!" the big man said gruffly, but with a friendly twinkle in his eyes.

"Afraid of my going out, are you, Jem?" the girl said, with the comradeship of long acquaintance. "What would Dad and Tom do if I wasn't with them for Sunday dinner on Rocking Light? You wouldn't have the heart to do it! You had a hard time last night, I'm thinking, in that nor'east blow?"

It was a feminine twist that threw the big Captain off his guard. There was just the suspicion of brogue, a very little one, in the girl's coaxing voice; and Captain Casco seemed to like it, for his hard-cut face cracked in a smile as he nodded.

"You have a way of your own, haven't you, Noreen? Middling. They had more trouble below. I heard they lost a couple at Harvey Cedars—"

The girl put her hand to the breast of her knitted jacket. "Not the station?"

"No, no! The ship that came in—British, I think she was. Your dad and brother are all right out on Rocking Light, o' course. The steel ship's waiting for the Sunday dinner and the 'Luck,' an' so I s'pose I'll have to let her go."

The girl smiled at the nickname. It was a jest of her father's, who vowed that only her Sunday visits brought the new experimental light on the shifting sands of Lizard Reef the luck to last out against the dangers encompassing this, the most dangerous post along the coast, of which he and her boatman brother had charge.

"Then you will let me go out?" Noreen caught Captain Casco up. "That's sensible, Cap'n Jem. I was going, anyway."

He laughed. "Was you? Watch the sea, then, as you do: it's full o' der'lits. An' the wind too. It's comin' in flaws yet; but it'll be blowin' things I don't like before night. Watch out now you come back early, or I'll be after you in the big boat, Noreen girl!"

The big Captain of Ships Bottom lifted off the rowboat and walked across the inlet's shore as the strong-armed, clear-eyed Irish girl pulled the boat through to the sea.

"Tell MacMurdo we'll have the glass on him from the tower day and night in case of happenings. Don't worry, Lass."

She understood and met his look brave-eyed. "That's like you boys!" she said. "Now I'll need all my breath for the pull, Cap'n Jem. Maybe I'll find salvage and a home for all three of us outside."

It was said in cheery jest, and he nodded back, still watching her doubtfully until the red rowboat, steadily holding her course, passed the wash of the Gridiron Reef, a gunshot from the inlet, and took the rollers on the far side. Then, shaking his head, he turned and retraced his steps to the station.

A cold, misty rain had come up to thicken the atmosphere still more. Even after reaching the station, the big Captain of Ships Bottom, moved by some prescience of imminent danger, gazed out to sea, half inclined to send the lifeboat after the intrepid girl. But the red rowboat had passed into the mist, going out with the tide.

ROCKING LIGHT, MacMurdo's daughter, was a favorite with the Ships Bottom men. They, as well as every bayman on Barnegat Bay, knew her worth, and her anxiety and heart shaking fear, not for herself but for those she loved; and the cause of her trouble,—



The Word Choked in Noreen's Throat. Speechless, She Pointed Astern.

the dangerous post her father and brother held out on the shifting sands of Lizard Shoals.

It was only the spring before that the new steel tower had been built by the Government engineers as an experimental light and signal tower, far out on those treacherous shifting sea sands that lay in wait for deep water ships making for the bay, which were constantly changing their position, crawling under water like some malignant marine monster striving to head off its victims.

Built on caissons, in the very sands themselves, the post of the keepers on the light was one of acknowledged peril; for no man knew or could divine what might be the result of a real winter storm on its unstable foundations.

But, calm or storm, it was the keeper's duty to signal ships, keeping them posted on the changing location of the submarine sand monster. Rocking Light was there as much to watch the sands as to serve as a sea lamp post; for hidden shoals might form in a night, and any night of high water or heavy winds might see the little lighthouse itself topple to destruction.

For this reason Noreen MacMurdo lived in constant terror. At times for days on end she hardly knew the fate of father or brother, and her one ardent prayer to Providence was for the modest competence that would bring the three together in a little home of their own in Barnegat village, where the motherless girl lived alone now.

Sunday visits to the Light were all that were permitted her by a beneficent Department of Lighthouses and Life Saving, ever mindful of the possible perils of the still unproved light, weather permitting; but they were days of joy and Lucullan feasting.

So it was this Sunday morning that, after leaving Captain Casco, Noreen struck straight through the slaty sea where the "Steel Ship," as Rocking Light was known in grim chaffing the coast over, loomed up to the northward like a red eye on top of a warship's basket mast.

ROUND the base of the spindling steel tower the anxious watchers awaited the coming of the "Luck of Rocking Light."

"She'll not come today," Brother Tom said, casting a sorrowful eye on the weather. "Roast lamb Sunday it is too!"

"For two pins I'd stretch you!" his father retorted, casting an angry eye at the brawny six-footer. "You're all stomach, an' think naught o' the danger to the lass. Can't ye see it's coming on to blow?"

"I wasn't thinking," Tom said, abashed. "The smother an' the wind's ag'in' her too. Pity the blessed department can't build lights where they've a chance o' standing still—an' let us have her with us, eh, Dad?"

"With all my heart to both remarks!" returned MacMurdo.

Another half-hour brought with it a musty smell from the northeast and added anxiety. The sea was sullen and gray. Father and son exchanged glances.

"Would Casco let her, think ye?" Tom asked.

"The smell of it coming hasn't reached him yet," said the father.

"He'd never see our light signal in this smother. She's due to leave the station too!"

The base of the steel basket mast quivered in the restless movement of the sand below. Above, the light, with a curious, sullen look through the atmosphere seaward, was still fairly clear.

Without a word the two men sprang to the falls of the whaleboat. A moment later the boat was cutting the water with all the strength of their brawny arms. "Let's

hope we'll be in time to stop her!" one said—or both thought. Better that than risk her precious life on Rocking Light in the coming storm.

SO it was that when Noreen MacMurdo reached the Steel Ship, standing trembling and deserted on the shoals, she saw at a glance that she was alone. It occurred to her they might have gone in to stop her; for now that she was outside she was sailor enough to recognize the signs of thick weather at sea.

"Half the day they'll miss, and pull their poor arms off besides!" she said. Noreen was not one to stand regretting. "I'll get the socks and things together, and straighten up," she concluded. "I believe they'd never change a sheet from here to Doomsday, had they their will and way."

She finished the living room, and then, oppressed by a curious feeling of uneasiness, which she attributed to the restless movement of the structure, she went above for a breath of air on the lamp gallery.

Rocking Light was simply a little steel shack built on stilts, or rather four spraddling legs, each anchored in its own caisson in the sand below, and built only high enough to clear the topmost waves in storm. Unbolting the door of the lamproom, she went out on the little balcony that encircled it.

The weight of the wind struck hard upon her in flaws, and she grasped the seaward rail, gazing first at the waters washing beneath, then out upon the dull ocean scene. The sense of a calling voice, seemingly wailing in a strange tongue, came to her with great force. Still the ocean, seaward, was empty.

She passed her hand over her eyes, striving to clear her vision. Two miles away her eyes fell on a bank of wavering vapor floating over the outer shallows. Elsewhere all was gray and gloomy, both sea and sky. For a moment she gazed aimlessly. Then she gripped the iron rail in her strong hands and her figure grew tense, and yet again the voice called, a wild, bitter wail like a banshee, keening over the sea.

"Ah, now I see it—unless my eyesight's going with my brain!"

Another moment and she whipped into the lamproom, returning with the keeper's brass-bound telescope. Hardly had she leveled it upon the shallows when an exclamation broke from her; but the words that followed had no tinge of doubt in them.

"Tis not a large one, but big and dismayed. No, there's one spar standing; but where's the flag of distress? She's on the shallows, and she's washed clean. How did Dad miss her, I wonder? The fog smoke? Yes, that was it. She was hid in the smoke of low tide."

Noreen was at professional work now, and the glass she held was steady.

"What's that at the combing by the cuddy? There, it moves! 'Tis a man! He's raising his arms up!"

With Noreen and the sturdy daughters of these seabred, life-saving folk, the grim face of suffering and death at sea is a trumpet call to duty. She was halfway down the winding stairs in almost the next instant, making for the red rowboat.

Passing through the living room, she caught up a bottle of milk and a loaf of bread. Depositing these in the sternsheets of the boat, she sprang aboard, and started out on her errand of mercy. Taking the lighthouse for a guide, she did not look round again, but conserved her strength and nerve for the business before her.

She was almost upon the stranded vessel before she did turn. She glimpsed a big tan lighter which, striking the sands bow on, had lurched upon its bulging quar-

ters, its short, thick, sail-warped mast pointing to the southern skies. The top half of a row of letters painted the length of the tan-colored lee side, a big "No. 2" on the bow, and a trailing hawser told the story. She nodded wisely.

"I thought so. Broke adrift from a railroad tow in the north and washed down in the gale. She must have come a cruel hard way in the gale."

The lee rail of the lighter lifted two or three feet out of the water. Noreen reached the lee bulwark amidships and swung over the rail with the agility of the experienced sailor she was.

The bare-swept deck; the thick, leaning spar, convenient also as a hoisting derrick; the low cuddy cabin in the stern, aft of which a long tiller swung to and fro with the beating of the water against the rudder; the huge body of the craft for her length,—all proclaimed the regulation Eastern freight lighter, whose coastwise voyages are made on towlines, and whose lading may consist of anything from Boston codfish to ready-made houses.

Making fast the painter of the red carvel boat to a cleat, she plunged aft. The low cabin roof was not more than a dozen feet square, with an inclined hatch cover aft. She had almost reached the stern, when, glancing across the roof, she saw a terrible face on the upper side,—a young looking, boyish face, but red and cracked now with sea salt, with staring, white eyes.

Startled as she was, a wave of pity surged through the young girl's breast. "Oh, poor lad!" she cried. "Poor lost boy!"

Dashing the salt spray from her eyes, she struggled up the sloping deck. As she grasped the hatch cover, the boy behind the combingsprang up with a cry.

Noreen caught the dull gleam of a knife in time to throw herself agilely back. As she did so the long tiller snapped back, catching her fair across the temple, at the end of the swing.

AT Ships Bottom Life Saving Station big Captain Casco was uneasy. He had been uneasy all the afternoon,—unable to read, unable to smoke, unable to do anything but pace back and forth in the messroom, glancing from time to time out of the window upon the rain-swept sea.

"O' course MacMurdo can't keep her on the Light the night," he finally said to Little Welsh, the bowman, who was matting an oar butt on the floor of the station. "We've got to go out and get her, o' course, orders or no orders, if he tries it."

"Ijit if 'e don't hustle her in!" Welsh replied laconically. "Didn't Mac see what the weather was w'en they came in?"

The relieved patrol stamped into the station, shaking off the water like a big wet dog. "They're lightin' up early on the shoals," he said. "It's on'y three o'clock, an' not so thick yet."

Captain Casco strode to the door of the station. Another man was coming rapidly up from the beach.

"Hey, Jem!" he called. "Rocking Light's gone mad. She's winking like a girls' picnic. Noreen's comin' in. I just see the red boat pass the Gridiron."

Casco drew a deep breath. Throwing on his pea-jacket and cap, he started for the inlet.

Welsh looked up in surprise from his mats. "W'at's wrong?" he exclaimed to the patrol. "Listen to 'im a hailin' of Noreen!"

If Captain Casco was hailing Noreen MacMurdo, the hail sounded more like an angry roar than a friendly salutation, and at that moment the big keeper burst into the station.

"Out with her!" Casco cried. "MacMurdo's got the light on us, an' there's a crazy thing in Noreen's boat!"

Whatever "it" was in the inlet, it had no time to get farther than the mouth of the bay. While one man carried the struggling boy to the station, the others in the white motorboat shot through the inlet, making for Rocking Light. The thing dazed the senses of the big Captain of Ships Bottom; but he had seen all he wanted to see, for the boy had fought them with a knife, and the painter of the boat was cut clean across.

The journey that Noreen had made to the lighthouse that morning the white motorboat made in a tithe of the time. The light had stopped blinking. The keepers had seen the lifeboat.

Suddenly Casco shut off the motor, and hollowed both his hands to his mouth. "Hoy, the Light!" he shouted. "Hey, MacMurdo, what's up?"

"Did Noreen go in again?" The keeper's voice reached them down wind with a quaver.

For the space of a breath there was silence in the boat. "Tell him yes, Jem," Long Johnson said.

"Her boat just passed through the inlet, MacMurdo—an' God forgi'e me the lie!" Casco groaned.

"Ah-h! Thank the Lord for that! I was fair mad, Jem lad. We'd not passed her coming out, no more than goin' in; but she was gone, an' the red boat was gone when we got back. But then Noreen is never one to wait patient-like should she find us away."

"What does it mean?" Casco said. "What d'ye make of it, Boys?"

"Chug round a bit while we think it out," one of the

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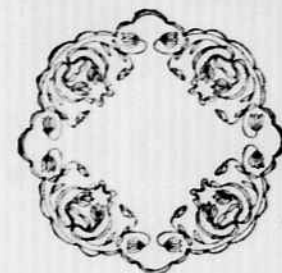
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THE LUCK OF ROCKING LIGHT

Continued from page 7

crew suggested. "He'll see it in our faces if we go in there now."

They heard the keepers talking together on the lighthouse abutment. MacMurdo's voice reached them again.

"Hi, Jem! Tom's just down. He's not sure, it's so thick outside. There's a glim, like a composant, he says, out on the shallows."

A deep sigh, almost a shudder, rose from the boat. Casco started up the motor.

"Now it's plain," he said quietly. "All right, MacMurdo," he shouted to the keeper. "Keep the light on a bit."

"Aye, aye!" the answer came cheerfully. "We'll have coffee ready comin' back. She's comin' on to blow soon."

In the same dead silence in which they came out, Casco swung the motorboat out of the lighthouse.

"That little devil had a knife!" someone said.

"Silence in the boat!" Casco ordered sternly.

The big white surfboat, spray covered and with chugging motor, breasted the ocean, forging her way through.

Suddenly Casco exclaimed, "She's on the lighter, Boys! She's tending a flare on the bows!"

NOREEN, haggard, hollow eyed, greeted them from the deck of the lighter as the lifeboat swept up to the lee rail. A cloth was wrapped round her head, and her long hair was loosened and disordered in the wind and rain. But the girl's strong face was as firm as ever. There was a look on it they could not fathom.

"Name o' Heaven, Noreen girl, what's happened?" Casco cried. "Never mind now. Give us your hand while I steady you aboard."

"You'll be doing no such thing, Cap'n Jem!" Noreen retorted with spirit. "You'll do as I say, if ever you've had a kind thought for me. No, no," she cried excitedly, "don't put foot aboard!"

"But, Noreen, you're hurt—you're not yourself."

Noreen checked a telltale little laugh. "If it's my head you're referring to, Cap'n Jem—why, 'twas the poor lad that startled me, and it got in the way of the tiller. But otherwise 'tis all right, an' I'll have you take notice particular that my own two hands lashed that same tiller an' made the pan of pitch on the bow, after the poor little lad ran off with th' boat an' drowned himself. And now, please, please, be off to the Light as fast as you can, an' bring back Dad an' Tom! I've taken possession, and I mean to save the lighter with their help."

Casco watching her anxiously, made a motion to Long Johnson, who rose from the thwart.

"We can't leave you alone on this pounding beer barrel. Be good, Noreen girl; but if you won't come aboard—"

Noreen clasped her hands passionately. "Oh, Cap'n Jem, would you rob me an' Dad an' Tom—just when I've found the way out of all our trouble an' worry? Sure you're not worrying about me—the Luck of Rocking Light, because of a bit of weather," she wheedled. "Ask me no questions, an' do not come aboard on the high seas. An' now be off with you! I know what I'm doing, really!"

Captain Casco turned to the listening crew. "The sin's on my soul if the squall blows," he cried savagely. "Start the motor, Welsh. Spin her along as fast as she'll go, or I'll pitch you into the sea with my own two fists!"

NOREEN had a way of getting what she wanted; besides, Casco began to see a light. The motor swung before the wind blast, and Noreen went forward to the lighter's bows and sat down beside the pan of flaring pitch. Her head ached cruelly, and she held it in her hands while she communed with herself.

"My head aches bitter bad; but no matter if only they come in time." A smile stole over her face as she lifted it to glance at a big roller that pounded over the stern and swept to the hatch cover. With the resilience of youth she saw the shadows vanish from her future. "It's the end of our hard times an' worries; it's safety for Dad an' Tom! Pray—pray the blessed boat may not clear the bar before they come back!"

Another big sea bowled tons of water over the lighter's deck, sending it awash. The vessel surged ahead half a dozen feet over the submerged sands. Clutching the rail in readiness for another lunge, Noreen watched the careening of the lighter anxiously, and the black water coming before the gale. The

levanter was stretching its arms and filling its cheeks again.

For the third time the big boat rocked and ground; but at the same time a hail from leeward and the chugging of the motor came to her. The lifeboat loomed up like a spray-sheeted ghost, and a roar told of the coming of Noreen's father.

AFTER the lifeboat had gone in, Old Ocean off Barnegat saw three people, two men and a woman, making sail on a big, tan-colored lighter, the woman with a bandaged head standing by the tiller, and the two men working like madmen at a huge standing spar,—the mast and hoisting derrick in one.

"'Twill cost me my number for not standin' by the Light; but there's naught more we could do there, on'y git off of it," MacMurdo said. "For Noreen wouldn't go!"

Tom only grinned, a wide grin of complete enjoyment. No, Noreen would not go ashore in the lifeboat—not for any inducement.

"If there's danger, we'll face it together, Dad," she said. "If this ship will sail at all, I've gone through enough to sail on it."

"The blow's comin' heavier an' heavier,—there's wind behind that, big wind—"

"The sooner it will be over, then," Noreen said, cutting her brother short. But fear was in her own heart,—not fear of the storm: the same inexplicable feeling that had taken her on the Rocking Light.

"What is it?" she said. "What is it, un-less—"

Was that the white lifeboat off to the northeast? Her heart was in her mouth. It couldn't be Casco coming back—not from that direction!

Both men saw it before she could call out. Tom let the big boomless leg-o'-mutton sail flap to leeward, and both men jammed the tiller hard down, working the lighter's head to the coming gale.

"Jump below, Sis! You'll get blown overboard! There's water behind it too—a mountain—a reg'lar seawash—"

Tom's words were blown from his mouth. The two men wrapped their arms round the long tiller, clinging to it for life.

A moment before the lighter had been wallowing and plunging in a heavy sea, but making good headway for Barnegat Inlet, with Rocking Light gradually going astern to starboard.

Now the whole sea seemed to lift bodily and fall upon the wallowing craft. It struck the lighter bow on; not lifting, but crushing her under. Tons of water swept over her, from bow to stern. Then she lifted higher and higher. Tom gasped:

"The hull drink's blowed up from bottom!"

The great tidal wave passed; the lighter rolled and wallowed again on what seemed, in comparison, smooth water. The wind was still blowing strong, but steady.

"Oh!" Noreen gasped. "I hope they're not wet!"

Even in the danger the men laughed. MacMurdo opened the hatch. The leg-o'-mutton sail was still standing, and the boat uninjured, so far as they could see.

"We'll make another start," he said.

The great wave seemed to have cleared the atmosphere in passing. Overhead stars broke out. Dead ahead they saw Ships Bottom lights, and those of Barnegat village far beyond.

"Rocking—" The word choked in Noreen's throat. Speechless, she pointed astern. Far as they could see—east, north, south—there was no sign of the ill-fated Rocking Light.

"Our light's a goner, Dad!" Tom MacMurdo cried. "Lucky we wasn't on her!"

"The big wash took her, like the Department's always feared 'ud happen," MacMurdo agreed. "Let's be gettin' ashore, Boy. She'll be blowin' up again."

SOMETIME after dark, a big, tan-colored lighter wallowed in through Barnegat Inlet, on the teeth of a strong northeast wind, rolling and plunging under the pull of a leg-o'-mutton sail, and dropped anchor back of Ships Bottom Life Saving Station.

"And thank Heaven," Noreen's clear voice broke out, supremely happy, "not a soul has set foot on this boat but ourselves! She's ours!"

A moment later all of Ships Bottom crew climbed over the side, headed by the Captain.

Without a word, the big man strode up to Noreen MacMurdo, where she stood, pale but brave eyed in the starlight, and without a word lifted her up in his great arms and kissed her. The whole Ships Bottom crew promptly followed suit. Then they all went over the side into the white lifeboat, accom-



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panied by MacMurdo and his son, and the boat shot out of the inlet to see what was left of the experimental station of Rocking Light.

"An' jest wait till our gals hears o' that!" remarked Little Welsh to his friend Long Johnson.

IT howled at sea that night; but the le-vanter blew itself out before morning. The full light of a sunshiny day brought with it a tan-colored tug, with smokestack let-tered the same as "Noreen's Luck," as Ships Bottom called the saved (and saving) lighter, and a sharp looking man on the for-ward deck. When he espied the lighter he directed the tug Captain to lay alongside immediately.

Noreen stood in the cabin hatchway, clad in her red sweater, with a knitted cap pulled down to her pretty gray eyes.

"Ah, I see our lighter drifted down your way," the man on the tug remarked. He noted that he had only a young girl to deal with. "We had a long, wet chase after it."

"It's did blow some, didn't it?" responded Noreen sweetly.

"And now we've found it, we'll just take it along," the man concluded suavely. "The lighter's worth thousands of dollars. The hold's full of pianolas, and I'm glad it came to no harm."

"And what about me?" said Noreen. "I found this lighter derelict and abandoned, and sailed it into harbor with Dad and my brother Tom. It was a family party; for never another foot trod the deck. Won't you please keep your line off, Sir?"

The agent looked at her a moment. He hadn't expected to meet a pretty girl. The gray eyes smiled back; but there was a look in them that automatically operated to make him doff his hat with a flourish. He knew when he was beaten.

"What do you demand of us?" he asked. "Why, my salvage of course, on what the cargo's worth," Noreen said, wide eyed and innocent.

The agent wished he had not set a valua-tion on that cargo; but he smiled back at her pretty face nevertheless.

"Just the same, Cap'n Jem," Noreen con-fided later to the big life saver, "after I've bought Dad his little farm, I'm going to send whatever's left back to the railroad as a thank offering. 'Twas their lighter saved Dad and Tom, after all."

"I'm thinking you had your own share in it, Noreen. Your dad was right when he called you the Luck of Rocking Light," said Casco. "You can't shift the blame from the Department for keepin' 'em off post to that old lighter. Guess you'll have to buy it, to keep it from workin' overtime."

"I'll think about it," said Noreen; then, seriously, "Anyway, I'm going to do some-thing for that poor little lost boy, anyway, in return for great mercy to my own. I'm glad you saved him too, Cap'n Jem. Oh, we'll all be glad for everything!"

"Except the Department; f'r its lost ex-perimental light," said Casco. "I reckon they won't try another thereagain in a hurry."

"An' that's another mercy," said Noreen, "whether the Department knows it or not!" And then they both laughed.

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But the man whom Mr. Furniss places above all others is an Ameri-can. The artist illustrates his sketches with an article that is as inter-esting as the pictures. The combination makes a notable feature in our next SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF BLAKELY is an amazing tale by Paul West. It seems so impossible that it may be on that bor-derland of truth which is stranger than fiction. It is the story of a bril-liant rogue, told by himself, who felt that he was outwitted by Fate, compelling him to pay the penalty for a crime he did not commit because—but you must read the story yourself. That is the only way to get its full value. It is an absorbing romance of a crime.

HOW THE GLORY BE CAME BACK is a Torchy story that brings to mind vividly the first meeting with that truly extraordinary youth. For the Glory Be mining swindle and Belmont Pepper, its promoter, served to introduce Torchy to the readers of our SUNDAY MAGAZINE. If you had the good fortune to read that story, you will remember how the resourceful boy outwitted all the other applicants for a job, and his admiration and affection for his get-rich-quick em-ployer, in whom the red-headed one believed implicitly.

It paid, that faith, in more ways than one, and it is this particular character of Torchy's that makes him really great. The harking back to the beginning brings home a realization of the joy and laughter Torchy has given us during the years we have known him. There is a suspicion that he is growing up, and we don't know whether to be glad or sorry. But the important thing is that he will always be Torchy, picturesque, brilliantly clever, always ready to help anybody, and mak-ing the world laugh the while.

THE second part of **BECOMING A FAN AT SIXTY**, by Bozeman Bulger, is in our next number. If you read that which appears in this issue, you will be eager to finish the narrative. The old farmer that tells about himself and the baseball star he raised on his farm is very real—and so is his wife. There isn't so much baseball as there is human nature in the story; although it does give illuminating flashes that reveal the sides of great baseball players that are little known.

WHEN Doris Waverton goes to the country home of the husband she has divorced, eager for a reconciliation, the man drives her away, although there isn't any doubt of his love for her. Things be-come painfully complicated in **NO OTHER WAY**, the detective serial by Gordon Holmes. But the reader is no less puzzled than the chief characters themselves; including the truly clever Clancy, one of the best detectives in fiction. All of which goes to make it a particularly absorbing mystery story.



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